



**Overview, Agreement & Profile**

**This document is made available to students**

**Overview:**

It is a requirement that *MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics* students undertake a minimum 2-week catering placement in an institutional setting during year 1 Practice Placement 1 (DIET40080) under the guidance and supervision of the catering and/or nutrition and dietetics department(s).

This will usually be undertaken by a pair of students working together, as two consecutive, 4-day weeks of 28 hours each, under the direction of the catering department and/or the nutrition and dietetics department, with the fifth weekday spent with the full class in an authentic learning environment (ALE). Students present their catering project to their peers and the UCD programme placement team for critique and analysis, placement educators are invited to attend this presentation in person or online, which is usually held in November. Students at this point have acquired foundation knowledge and skills in nutrition, dietetics and communications.

All students are Garda Vetted, meet occupational health requirements, have completed hand hygiene training, and are covered by insurance provided by UCD.

Catering placement is invaluable as students learn to integrate knowledge acquired during the academic component of year 1 into practice of how a catering department is administered and operated, how it engages with service users, hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) and hygiene regulations; calorie counting, creating sample menus for patients with specific needs and/or food allergens etc.

There is no obligation for the student to spend time with a dietitian during the 2-week catering block. However, if there is an opportunity for students to be exposed to a collaborative working environment between the catering team and the dietetic department, this is beneficial. A UCD practice tutor is available to both catering placement providers and students for the duration of the placement.

During the placement the student should, as a minimum, be exposed to:

1. Food procurement, handling and storage.
2. HACCP, food safety, allergen labelling and other relevant policies, and how they are implemented.
3. How menus are designed and rotated.
4. How meals are prepared and stored.
5. Food delivery systems to the end service user.



*Some practical examples of the experience students obtained on the Catering Placement include:*

- Observing the roles and responsibilities of all staff in the catering department and kitchen, including the operation of the institution's food delivery system to the end service user.
- Observation of, and participation in, "special diet" preparation e.g., modified texture, food for people with coeliac disease, diabetes, or requiring high protein/energy diets.
- Observation of, and participation in, delivery of food to the ward and the service user and how food waste is measured/monitored.
- Observation of, and participation in, portion control and delivery to the service user.

#### **Catering Project**

While on placement, each student pair will undertake and complete a nutrition/dietetic-related project for the catering department which demonstrates integration of theory into practice. Commencing in 2025, the 2024 students will suggest a student led project design as a follow on from the 2024 project. Regardless of the choice of project, it is agreed in advance of placement commencement by the catering manager or a designated representative in collaboration with the UCD practice education team.

*Further Practical Examples:*

- Analysing standard recipes, menus or food record charts with and without nutrient analysis software. Comparison of nutrient calculations with current national guidelines.
- Completing nutritional analysis of high energy, high protein diets provided to service users and comparing this analysis to national recommendations.
- Auditing the mealtime experience for service users: the food delivery atmosphere, photos of the meals served and investigation of service users meal experiences.
- Designing and constructing posters for the catering department on food fortification.
- Designing and analysing specific "special diet" recipes e.g., high protein, high calorie snacks, desserts, gravies, sauces.

#### **Learning objectives of the catering placement:**

Students should be able to:

- o Describe the processes of meal production, selection, service and delivery within the institutional setting.
- o Discuss portion sizes of common foods and the food portion sizes used within the institutional setting
- o Outline how nutrition principles can be applied to food services within the institutional setting.
- o Evaluate the impact of food service regulations, standards and guidelines on the nutritional quality, hygiene and temperature regulation of food service systems.



- o Identify the role of food services personnel in the delivery of nutritional care.
- o Recognise the limitations of institutional food services systems in the delivery of nutritional care.
- o Critically analyse the food served in comparison to population recommendations.
- o Discuss the importance of integrating nutrition and dietetics into the provision of food services in the institutional setting.

### **Learning and teaching methods**

Supervised work-based learning (by the catering manager or a designated representative) and self-directed learning by the student. Some of this learning can be undertaken offsite.

### **Assessment methods**

The placement is assessed as follows:

- **Catering Workbook:** completed by the student, then reviewed and signed off by the Catering manager/Dietitian and/or a designated UCD practice tutor at the end of the placement.
- **Catering Project:** completed by the student, then reviewed and signed off by the Catering manager/Dietitian and/or a designated UCD practice tutor.
  - o **Catering Poster Presentation:** the student pair will design and deliver an overview and key findings of the catering project via a live and online poster presentation to peers, Catering manager/Dietitian/UCD practice tutor/academic staff during a timetabled Friday tutorial usually in November.
    - **Form H: Case presentation:** Must be requested by the student to [mscdietetics@ucd.ie](mailto:mscdietetics@ucd.ie) for review and signed off by a UCD practice tutor.
- **Form D: Timesheet:** Completed by the student, reviewed and signed off by the Catering Manager and a CORU-registered Dietitian, namely a dietitian onsite, or a designated UCD practice tutor.



## MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics

### Catering placement within Practice Placement 1, module: DIET40080

#### Agreement & Profile

<b>Agreement start date:</b>	1 August 2025
<b>Agreement end date:</b>	1 August 2027

These dates relate to the validity of the content, roles and responsibilities. Reviewed: July 2025 Next Review Date: July 2027

<b>Formal Agreement &amp; Profile</b> <b>between</b> <b>University College Dublin and Practice Placement Provider for</b> <b>MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics Practice Placement Education</b>	
<b>and</b>	
<b>Catering organisation &amp; address:</b>	<b>Designated staff students will report to:</b>  <b>Location and time on day 1:</b>
<b>Catering Services provided:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>Contact email:</b>
<b>Locations of all sites students are expected to attend:</b>	
<b>Duration of placement</b> <b><u>4 days week: 28 hours per week</u> for 2 weeks</b>	
<b>Number of students:</b>	

<b>Please outline any specific expectations you have of the students and how they are expected to fulfil them:</b>	
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b> 1. What specific clothing or footwear required? 2. Is this provided or does the student need to source?	1.  2.
<b>Dress code/uniform if different to above.</b>	
<b>Is pre reading required? If yes please provide.</b>	
<b>Please outline any mandatory training required in advance.</b>	
<b>Other?</b>	



## MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics

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Please provide a rough timetable of potential onsite/offsite activities/locations

Activity/location	Monday	Tues	Wed	Thurs
Week 1 Morning				
Afternoon				
Week 2 Morning				
Afternoon				

Please suggest a potential Catering project:

☐ Please tick to confirm that the project outcome(s) can be shared for education and research purposes.



**Staff who will be involved in delivering student training\*\***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>(CORU number if relevant)</b>

**It is the responsibility of the Catering/Nutrition and Dietetics Department to:**

- Provide a named lead supervisor to the student prior to and during the placement.
- Provide a timetable including daily working hours in defined locations.
- Advise of suitable dress code in advance of placement, including any requirement to procure safety specific clothing/shoes.
- Treat the student fairly and with respect and not take advantage of the unpaid work placement in terms of expectation to work overtime etc.
- Complete this catering agreement and profile form and send it to [dietetics.admin@ucd.ie](mailto:dietetics.admin@ucd.ie) within 2 weeks of receipt.
  - Ensure the student is informed of the local health and safety, and infection control policies and requirements.
- Provide and supervise practical exposure as described on page 1 of this document "Overview of catering placement within non-acute practice placement module."
- Provide feedback to students and sign off on the Catering Workbook and timesheet.
- Provide (including outlining aims and objectives of the Catering Project), supervise and sign off on a nutrition/dietetic related project as described on page 2 of this document "Catering Project".
- Communicate directly with the [mscdietetics@ucd.ie](mailto:mscdietetics@ucd.ie) (UCD practice tutor) immediately if any concerns occur during the placement.
- Provide feedback to students on their performance during the placement, sign off on placement hours and the Placement Assessment Form.

**It is the responsibility of the student to:**



- Present punctually on a daily basis as per the timetable issued. Catering placement hours are expected to total 70 hours over 2 weeks as 2 x 28 hours per 4 weekdays plus 2 x 7 hours days in ALE each Friday. Placement hours must be logged on Form D: Timesheet and signed off by the catering manager or a designated representative.
- Always act in a professional manner with other staff, service users and colleagues.
- Always dress as advised by the catering department (students will be advised when safety shoes are required).
- Comply with local health and safety and infection control policies as per placement profile and local induction.
- In the event of absence, follow the procedure as outlined in the Student Practice Education Handbook.
- Act within their scope of practice, taking direction and feedback from placement supervisors and other catering personnel.
- Complete the catering project, poster and catering workbook, ensuring it is signed-off appropriately as described above .
- Complete essential reading as outlined below or as advised by the catering department in advance of starting placement.

### **Placement Site Training**

Training is provided to the catering manager and/or CORU-registered dietitian in-house or virtually by the UCD practice tutors. Training presentations are short 13 minute pre recordings available at this link: <https://youtu.be/qBr8lalvWBc>. The training includes an overview of the *MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics* programme, learning outcomes for the non-acute placement module, learning objectives for the catering placement, the paired learning model, assessment, feedback and the role of the UCD practice tutor. By signing this agreement it is implied that the Catering Manager (or designated representative) or Nutrition & Dietetic Manager will ensure that all staff involved in providing Catering Placement and training will be directed to and complete the online training resource.

### **Recommended Student Reading:**

- Department of Health and Children, 2004: Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-school Services.
- European Federation of the Association of Dietitians 2016: Position Paper on the Role of the Food Service Dietitian.
- FSAI: Legislation and documents on food allergen declaration.
- HIQA 2016: National standards for residential care settings for older people in Ireland.
- HIQA 2016: Report on nutrition and hydration in public acute hospitals.
- HSE 2019: Food, nutrition and hydration policy for adult patients in acute hospitals.



## MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics

### Catering placement within Practice Placement 1, module: DIET40080

- HSE 2019: Implementation toolkit for Food, nutrition and hydration policy for adult patients in acute hospitals
- HSE, Healthy Ireland, **safe**food 2019: Nutrition standards for food and beverage provision for staff and visitors in healthcare settings.
- Practice Paper of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Principles of Productivity in Food and Nutrition Services: Applications in the 21st Century health Care Reforms Era. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.2015;115(7):S1141-1147.
- **safe**food knowledge network (online): Food hypersensitivity guidelines for catering and child care environments.
- Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2018: Quality and regulatory framework for childcare. Regulation 22: Food and Drink.

For further Information, please contact the UCD practice education team on [dietetics.admin@ucd.ie](mailto:dietetics.admin@ucd.ie)

Signature on behalf of UCD:

Associate Professor James Mathews

Dean & Head of School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science

Date: 11/07/2025.

On behalf of Catering site:

Print name of Catering Manager/Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Catering manager/Dietitian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_